

Economic Commission for Europe

Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

Bureau

Sixteenth meeting

Geneva, 29 November 2019

Report on the sixteenth meeting of the Bureau¹

I. Attendance

Bureau members: Ms. Tina Skårman (Sweden, Chair), Ms. Marie-Rose van den Hende (Belgium, Vice-Chair), Ms. Ulrike Schöler (Germany, Vice-Chair), Mr. Alex Radway (European Union), Mr. Nebojsa Redzic (Serbia), and Mr. Roland Ritter (Switzerland).
Observer: Ms. Mara Silina (European ECO-Forum).
Apologies: Ms. Lesya Karnaukh (Ukraine).

II. Opening and adoption of the agenda

1. The Chair opened the meeting highlighting that the Bureau is expected to focus its discussion on outcomes of the seventh meeting of the Protocol's Working Group of the Parties (Geneva, 28-29 November 2019), which will require a follow up by the Bureau. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda based on the below-mentioned items.

III. Development of the Protocol

2. Pursuant to the decision on the development of the Protocol taken by the Working Group of the Parties², the Bureau discussed its work on a new report on this subject matter and agreed that the new report should be prepared on the basis of the current Bureau's report (ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/6; ECE/MP.PRTR/WG.1/2019/6/Add.1; PRTR/WG.1/2019/Inf.2). In this regard, the current report could be updated with new information, its structure might be changed and/or a complementary new report could be prepared. The Bureau agreed to prepare a timeline with the major procedural steps to guide its work on the report. In addition, the Bureau identified the need to clarify what questions should be used for a survey among Parties and interested stakeholders to gather new information for the report.

¹ This document was not formally edited.

² See item 6: https://www.uncece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/pp/prtr/WGP-7/WGP-7_List-of-decisions_v29Nov2019as_adopted.pdf

3. Furthermore, the Bureau expressed its support to the format of this item at the seventh meeting of the Working Group. The Bureau stressed that such format, which included presentations and an interactive discussion at plenary, allowed both, to inform participants about relevant activities regarding pollutant release and transfer registers and to review the Protocol's development.

IV. Capacity building

4. The Bureau reflected on the format and outcomes of the agenda item on subregional and national activities considered at the seventh meeting of the Working Group. The Bureau agreed that this format provided a good opportunity for lively exchange of experiences among participants, including on countries' needs, challenges and good practices. The Bureau, therefore, affirmed its support to a similar format for this item at the future meetings of the Working Group.

V. Fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties

5. The Bureau welcomed the interest of the Government of Georgia to host the fourth session of the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties. The Bureau members exchanged their views regarding possibilities to provide additional contributions to support the host country in this regard.

6. The Bureau members also shared their opinions about holding extraordinary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties between its ordinary sessions as to consider specific issues which would require a faster decision by the Meeting of the Parties. In this context, the Bureau recalled that in accordance with the Protocol's article 17, the Meeting of the Parties shall hold an extraordinary session if it so decides in the course of an ordinary session or at the written request of any Party provided that, within six months of it being communicated by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe to all Parties, the said request is supported by at least one third of these Parties.

VI. Next meeting of the Bureau

7. The Bureau noted that its next meeting could take place in May/June 2020, subject to availability of a meeting room at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.
